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California State Senate

SENATOR
ROSS JOHNSON
THIRTY-FIFTH SENATORIAL DISTRICT



COMMITTEES
APPROPRIATIONS
GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION
INSURANCE
RULES
JOINT COMMITTEE ON RULES

June 4, 2004

Ms. Liane M. Randolph, Chair
Fair Political Practices Commission
428 J Street, Suite 620
Sacramento, CA 95820

Dear Ms. Randolph:

First, I want to congratulate the Commission Members for addressing the issue of candidate-controlled ballot measure committee in proposed regulation 18530.9. This regulation clearly strengthens Proposition 34 and would prevent candidates from evading the contribution limits in Proposition 34 by forming a ballot measure and receiving contributions in unlimited amounts.

However, I would also urge the Commission to consider aggregating contributions to a candidate-controlled campaign committee and a candidate-controlled ballot measure committee. Otherwise, you would be faced with a situation where contributors would have multiple opportunities to contribute to the same candidate. What is the sense in having contribution limits at all if they can effectively be doubled by permitting a candidate to merely form a ballot measure committee?

An additional issue raised by your staff in Regulation 18530.9 concerns the application of Section 85316 to candidate-controlled ballot measure committees. I agree that the post-election limitations should apply to candidate-controlled committees. Moreover, I would like to suggest that the Commission discuss the adoption of language that would prohibit a candidate from controlling a general purpose committee. That prohibition would not only make the issue of applying Section 85316 to a general purpose committee moot, but also prevent candidates from continuously soliciting and rolling over ballot measure contributions from one election to the next.

Ms. Liane Randolph
June 4, 2004
Page Two

As a co-author of the legislation which put Proposition 34 on the ballot, I urge you to take action on the issue of candidate-controlled ballot measure committees at your June 10th meeting. It is important that there be limitations on these committee in effect for the 2004 general election.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ross Johnson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

ROSS JOHNSON
Senator, 35th District